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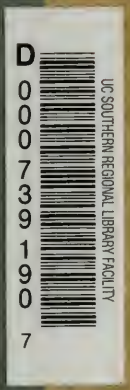

MEDIÆVAL TOWN PLANNING

A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY ON THE 13TH DECEMBER, 1916

T. F. TOUT, M.A., F.B.A.

BISHOP FRASER PROFESSOR OF MEDIÆVAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

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Vol. [illegible], No. 1, April-August, 1917

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BY

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MEDIÆVAL TOWN PLANNING.[1]

By T. F. TOUT, M.A., F.B.A.

BISHOP FRASER PROFESSOR OF MEDIÆVAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.

NOWADAYS the phrase town planning is dinned repeatedly into our ears. A generation, tending more and more to concentrate itself into great cities, is constantly told that town planning is the remedy for many of the most obvious evils of existence in the towns we are familiar with. An eminent architect told a Manchester audience some five years ago, that town planning means "the application to a town of that process of ordered forethought which we habitually apply to individual buildings".[2] It is because we have neglected to apply to our towns as wholes that process of looking ahead, which self-interest imposes on us when we build a house for ourselves, that our cities have grown up anyhow, and have in too many cases become mere rabbit warrens of disorderly alleys and overcrowded houses. And this state of things, barely tolerable in historical towns of moderate size, becomes absolutely unendurable in the overgrown cities which are the special feature of our modern civilization.

U. C. BERKELEY

It cannot be denied that our town planning enthusiasts have much reason on their side. They are never more right than when they reprobate the haphazard way in which our modern British cities have grown up. We of the north have very special reasons for lamenting the want of imagination shown by the builders of the great towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Perhaps it would be truer to say that there have been few builders of towns, but an infinite number of builders of individual houses and streets. What we most suffer from is the lack of adequate control on the part of some general authority, so

[1] An elaboration of the lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library, 13 December, 1916.

[2] Paul Waterhouse, *Old Towns and New Needs*, the Warburton lecture for 1912 (Manchester University Press, 1912), pp. 1-2.

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that each individual has been left to pursue his own interest wherever he conceived it to lie. The reasons for this neglect are written large in the political and social history of Britain, though we might also perhaps plead that there have been more numerous exceptions to this rule than modern architects and up-to-date social reformers sometimes imagine. But neither architects nor social reformers are as a rule historians, and they seldom know accurately either the historical conditions, which made town planning so difficult, or the extent to which these difficulties have been overcome. Even the dark days of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries show notable schemes of town planning, of which the best is doubtless the "new town" of Edinburgh. But faint suggestions of similar motives can surely be seen in the regular alignments and straight-cut streets which mark the early procession of modern Manchester southward from the original nucleus, and the first climbings of modern Liverpool eastward up the hillside outside the narrow limits of the mediæval town. Again old new quarters of London, such as the Duke of Bedford's Bloomsbury Estate, with its straight streets and leafy squares, are distinct evidences of the application by a great landlord of prudent forethought in directing the development of a town quarter springing up on the soil which he owns. Gower Street, which to Ruskin was the abomination of æsthetic desolation, the *reductio ad absurdum* of the hideous process that began with the Renascence, suggests to the town planner the bright promise of a future of well-ordered cities in which men may live in comfort and health. I would not like to say that either Ruskin or the town planner were wholly right or wholly wrong. I simply indicate in passing two rather different points of view.

We must refuse to traverse insidious bypaths, and get back to real business. My task to-night is not with the town of the future, or even with the town of the present, or the town of the recent past. Dryasdust, as is well known, is content to pursue his hobbies with a minimum amount of concern for the world he lives in, or for the world in which his descendants may live in. Yet even Dryasdust may find some pleasure in approaching his remote studies with some reference to the fashion in which the men of the period which he delights to study have overcome problems not dissimilar to those which vex the souls of his own age. When all the world is talking of town planning, the historic aspects of that problem may well occupy the attention of

the historian. It is natural nowadays for a mediævalist to interest himself in mediæval town planning. I cannot flatter myself that what I have to tell you to-night will give much practical guidance to those who are anxious to make the Manchester of the future better ordered and more wisely planned than the Manchester of the past. But it is not altogether unpractical to realize that remote ages had to grapple with the same problems as those which we ourselves are trying to meet, and it is eminently practical, if we are able, as I think we shall be able, to draw the moral that the methodical organization of town construction can only be attained when the impulses of the individual are adequately controlled by the corporate will of the community, and when the immediate advantage of the moment is subordinated to the ultimate welfare of the future.

Normal mediæval conditions were not particularly favourable to town planning. Both the small size of the ordinary mediæval state and the limited control which mediæval man had over material resources made it more difficult in those days to plan out a great town than it is for the great nations of the modern world with their almost unbounded power of harnessing nature to their service. In some ways we approach modern conditions more nearly if we go back to a more remote period, and particularly if we go back to the great days when the whole civilized west was ruled by the Roman Empire, or if we revert to the still more distant time when the kingdoms of Alexander and his successors compelled the near east to submit to a veneer of western civilization, and by so doing made the Roman Empire possible. What history teaches us as to ancient town planning is admirably set forth in a little book which Prof. Haverfield of Oxford published some four years ago.[1] I cannot do better than refer those of you, who would wish to go back even farther than I can do to-night, to Mr. Haverfield's lucid and orderly marshalling of the facts of this subject so far as illustrated by the Græco-Roman world.

Into the origins of town planning we have no need to follow him, for they have no conceivable relation to later times. Yet it is interesting to know that scholars have seen suggestions of town planning in the remote antiquity of the bronze age, and that Babylon

[1] F. Haverfield, *Ancient Town Planning* (Oxford University Press, 1913).

as described, perhaps wrongly described, by Herodotus, was laid out with straight streets running parallel to or at right angles with each other. Town planning of a more modern sort begins in the fifth century B.C., when Hippodamus of Miletus laid out Piræus, the port of Athens, in a form as rectangular as the irregularity of the ground allowed. But the ordinary Greek city had no plan at all, and Athens itself was in striking contrast to its port. Its glory was in its wonderful public buildings, its temples, and its colonnades ; its shame was in its fortuitous congestion of rude hovels, separated by tortuous lanes, which rivalled the squalor and disorder of a modern oriental city. But the cities of Greece grew and were not made. It was only when colonies were founded, or cities, like Piræus, were made all of a piece, that the town planner has his chance.

The town planner's opportunity came when Alexander and his successors plastered the near east with Alexandrias, Antiochs, Seleucias and Pergamons, destined from their foundation to be leading cities of a great empire, capitals of highly centralized despotisms. Yet the cities of the Hellenistic and Macedonian ages have no lesson for us, since such as are still great cities now represent not the regular proportions of their founders' designs but the picturesque confusion of a modern Turkish town, which has forgotten its origin under the long pressure of its fierce barbarian masters.

It was otherwise when the Roman Empire began to follow the example of the Macedonians by setting up, first in Italy, and afterwards in the conquered provinces of the west, colonies and municipalities whose sites have often been continuously inhabited ever since by civilized man. Their rectangular proportions, their straight, narrow streets, their regular blocks of building testify to the symmetry and method of their designers, and approach the simplicity of the Roman camp from which many of them arose. What Roman town planning was like can perhaps best be realized by him who wanders through the straight and narrow streets of the excavated portions of Pompeii, the more so when he realizes that exceptional circumstances made Pompeii one of the more irregular of the towns of ancient Italy. But what Vesuvius did for Pompeii, the Teutonic invasions did more effectively for most of the cities of the old Roman world. The barbarians from the north utterly broke down the continuity of Roman town life. Very few scholars nowadays believe that there was any organic connexion between

Roman municipal institutions and those of the middle ages and modern times. It is almost the same with sites as with institutions. Prof. Haverfield demonstrates to us that in our island of Britain the well-thought-out Roman scheme which made little Silchester, not only a well-planned town but a garden city on a small scale, did not survive the coming of the Angles and Saxons. Even when the barbarian conquerors crouched for shelter behind the old Roman walls of a derelict city, they reconstructed the interior of the town after their own fashion. Prof. Haverfield will not even allow that the apparently Roman plan of Chester and Gloucester, where four straight streets, running from four chief gates, meet together at a centre, has anything Roman about it. The main streets of Chester and Gloucester, London and Colchester are mediæval, not Roman, in their direction and alignment. At Colchester this is particularly clear, not only in the town area, but in its approaches. To the west, as Mr. Round tells us, the English settlers mapped out the open fields of the urban agricultural community which replaced the Roman city, and covered up with their crops the great Roman cemetery and the abandoned Roman road to London, while to its north a new highway led direct to the gates of the mediæval town.[1] Though a Roman gate still affords access to Lincoln from the north, the survival of a Roman line of road in continuation of it, through the city itself, is as likely to be the result of the topographical limitations of a narrow hill site as it is of historical survival. Whatever town planning the Romans brought to Britain, none of it has survived to afford any lesson to us. Its very existence has only been revealed by modern archæological research.

The case is the same, Mr. Haverfield tells us, in the great Roman towns of Southern France. Buildings have survived, but never the plan of the town. It is only in Italy that our authority can see any continuous survivals of Roman town planning in such instances as the Roman quarter of Turin. Yet even here the modern historian is tempted to ascribe the admirable regularity of the plan of that best planned of the historical cities of the peninsula not so much to the Romans as to the fostering care of the house of Savoy, ever anxious to embellish its

[1] See Mr. J. H. Round's remarkable inaugural presidential address to the Essex Archæological Society, "On the Sphere of an Archæological Society," reprinted from the *Transactions* of that Society, XIV. 4, and especially the map and the remarks on p. 11.

capital in comparatively recent times. Be this as it may, it remains that whatever Roman town planning has survived has come to us through the long centuries of the middle ages.

We have at last got to our real subject, but it was necessary for our purpose to appreciate the deep gulf that history has dug between the town planning of antiquity and later ages. With the middle ages we have to start afresh, and for many centuries we see conditions very inimical to town life in all its forms. While the Greek and Roman thought that the happy life could only be lived in the city, the nascent civilization of the middle ages was of the country not of the town. Its unit was the court and manor of the feudal landlord, the homesteads and farm buildings of his humbler tenants. There was neither the good government necessary for ordered town life, nor the commerce which made it economically possible for great hordes of men to dwell together in an urban area. When men still gathered together in little town communities, it was not by reason of any sentimental preference for civic life, but because the needs of protection and defence forced them to dwell side by side on some fortified hilltop, where they might save themselves from pirates and plunderers. But for that every man would have dwelt hard by the fields and meadows which assured him his subsistence.

It follows that as there were few towns there was no town planning in those dark ages which lay between the fall of the Roman world and the development of that well-marked type of civilization which we call mediæval. In those ages we must go to the great monarchies of the east if we would seek for new examples of town planning, as for instance at Baghdad, planned so well by one of the greatest of the Khalifs that it became the greatest commercial centre of the world of Islam. But it is even more improbable that these oriental town planners were imitated by westerns in later ages than that mediæval statesmen and architects consciously followed the town plans of Roman days.[1]

By the eleventh century the dark ages were drawing to a close. Strong kings and princes arose who ruled roughly but effectively over

[1] See on this subject a summary of Prof. Unwin's interesting lecture on "Eastern Factors in the Growth of Modern Cities; Baghdad and Saint Nicholas," in *Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society*, 1915-16, pp. 13-17. I appreciate the learning and admire the ingenuity and imagination of my colleague, but I cannot feel quite convinced as to the soundness of his general thesis.

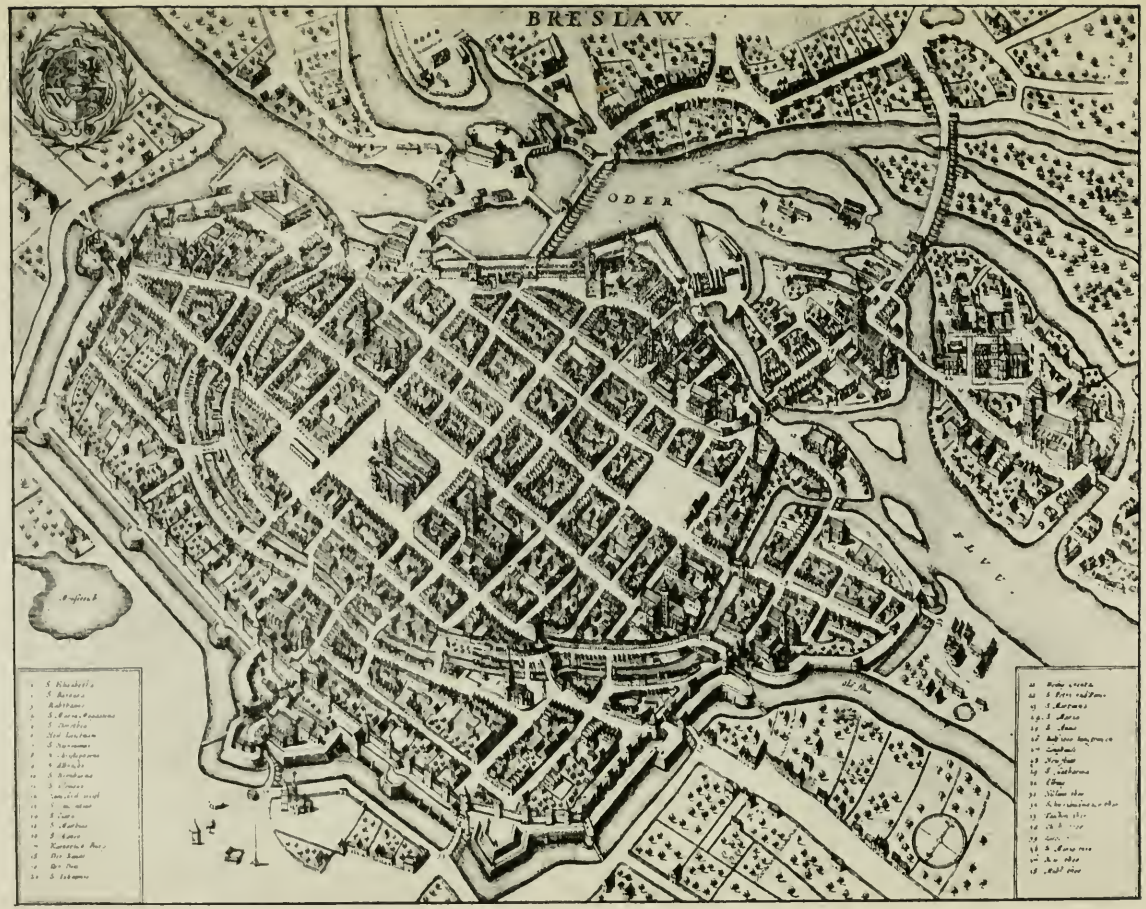
large dominions. With comparatively settled order a relatively high standard of well-being was insured. The result was the wonderful progress and prosperity of the twelfth century. And with this revival of strong rule came two results that boded well for towns. The successful emperor, king, or duke wished to hold down his conquered enemies, and promote among them his own ideals of civilization. The improved material prosperity gave once more a chance for trade and industry. And from conquest and commerce alike, there necessarily arose a new need for towns.

Some towns, including most of the great cities of history, grow; others on the other hand are made. And the process of town making is as legitimate as the process of constitution making. Prof. Pollard in a paradoxical moment has lately told us that constitutions that develop are better than constitutions that spring from the brain of the legislator.[1] The answer is that it all depends on the constitutions. This is the case with towns as well as constitutions. Under certain conditions both alike must be made, or they do not come into existence at all. We have now got to one of those periods of history in which, as in the Macedonian age, the conscious creation of towns on a large scale was both a political and economic necessity. With the "fever for founding towns" that marked the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the golden age of mediæval town planning set in. It is to this period that we have chiefly to address ourselves.

The political necessity for town making arose earlier than the economic need. In the humble beginnings of the new towns of the middle ages military considerations were always paramount. A strong ruler conquered a district adjacent to his old dominions, or wished to defend his frontier against a neighbouring enemy. He built rude fortresses and encouraged his subjects to live in them, so that they might undertake the responsibility of their permanent defence. Thus arose the "boroughs" which the successors of Alfred the Great "timbered" along the boundary line between their West Saxon inheritance and the Danelaw. Thus began the towns which the Carolingian conquerors set up in Saxony, and, later on, the fortresses of the same type which were erected by the Saxon emperors beyond the Elbe in the

[1] See his "Growth of an Imperial Parliament" in *History*, I. 129 *et seq.*, and the criticisms on it in the same periodical by Prof. Ramsay Muir and Mr. D. O. Malcolm, *ibid.* I. 193-214.

Slavonic districts which they were initiating into the priceless blessings of an early form of German *Kultur*. This primitive *Drang nach Osten* came to a head in the thirteenth century, when it had not only teutonized the lands between the Elbe and the Oder, but planted German colonies all through the East Baltic lands, through Poland and its subject states. For us the chief result was the setting up of new towns, military outposts of the Teutonic power, whose soldier-burgesses were to keep the Slavs and Letts in their places. In the new Teutonic towns in Slavonic lands, we have one great group of artificially-made towns, which, as the impulse became stronger, grew into something beyond mere fortresses. Their clergy and monks dragooned the rude natives into adopting the teachings of the church. The traders, who followed the soldiers and priests, found a profitable occupation in exploiting their economic necessities. The result was towns of sufficient size to demand some sort of planning on the part of their founders. Particulars of this process are very little known, or at any rate are little accessible to a lecturer writing in war-time in Manchester. But it is certain that not only were the older cities of Prussia, of Silesia, of Poland, and of Lithuania the result of such methods, but that the laying out of the oldest parts of many of these towns bears witness to this day of the rectilineal alignments and the rectangular blocks of allotments common to the town planners of every age. Thus Breslau, now for centuries a thoroughly Germanized town, was in its origin a Teutonic outpost among the Slavs of Silesia, and shows in its plan the marks of its origin. It is the same with the towns of Prussia, Livonia, and Poland. We see it, for instance, in the disposition of Breslau, and repeated in Cracow, the old capital of Poland. These influences perhaps went even farther east. Lithuania long resisted all Teutonic and Christian influences, and at last only took them filtered through Polish channels. Yet in Vilna, the chief city of Lithuania, the orderly ground plan of the central parts, stands in such contrast to the oriental disorder of its suburbs, that I feel constrained to show it to you along with the plan of Breslau. It is fair to add that both the Breslau and Vilna plans come from a seventeenth century book of town plans, which may owe something to the imagination of the map maker, who gave more and more flight to his fancy the farther he got eastwards. When he arrived as far east as Russia imagination exhausted itself with Moscow, and his plans of other Russian towns



I. Breslau

(From Braun & Hohenberg: "Civitates orbis terrarum". *Cologne*, 1612-17)

are more or less pretty pictures which give no guidance to the topographer.

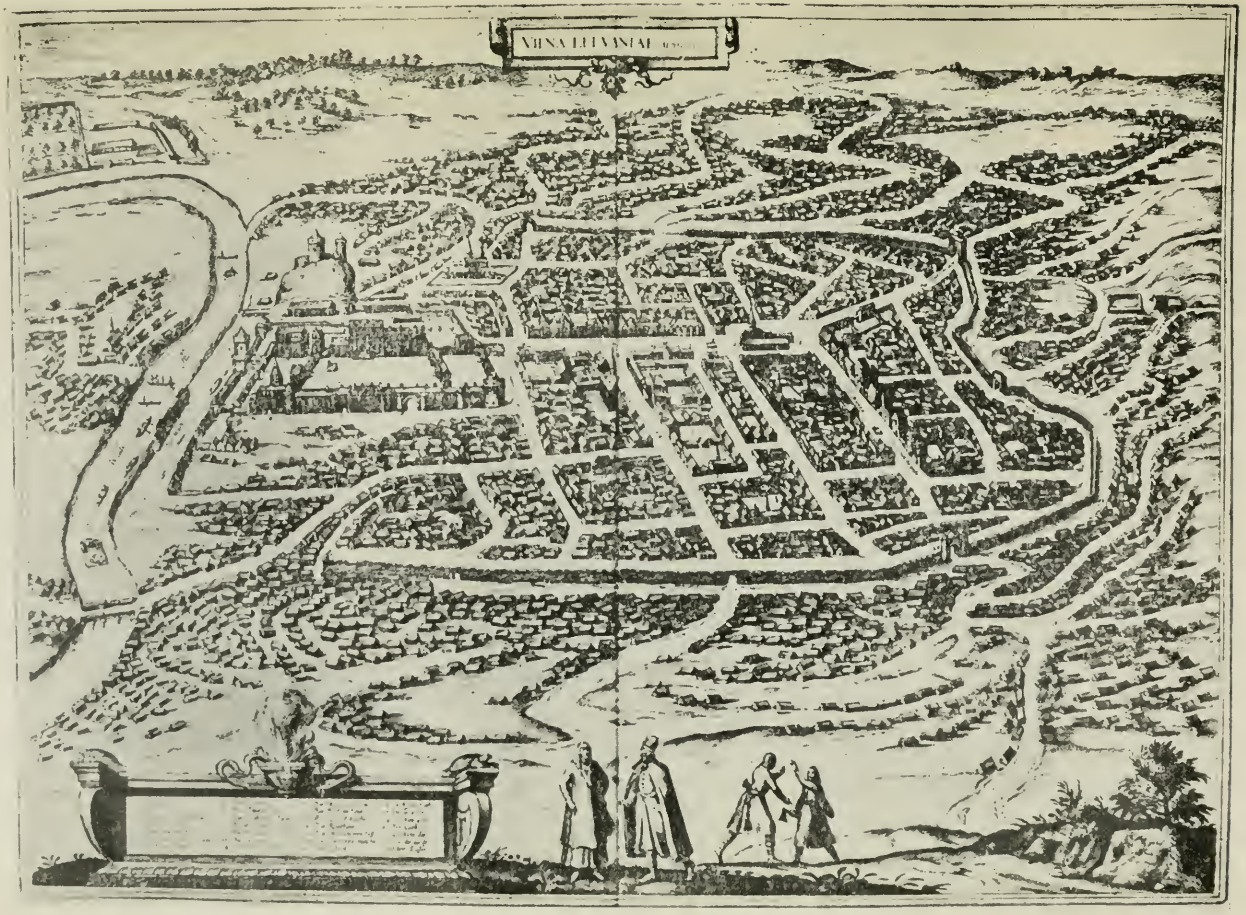
Let us turn to other aspects of our subject which are easier to trace and which have more direct relation to ourselves and our own history. The process, which pushed forward the Teutonic cause from the Elbe to the Oder and from the Oder to the Vistula and Dvina, was repeated whenever a conqueror came to a new country with followers eager for land-grabbing. We see it in England after the Norman Conquest when the French-speaking king and his French barons set up numerous little towns in their demesne lands and attracted settlers to them by the promise of liberties, such as towns in their own lands beyond the Channel had long enjoyed. Such new towns were specially numerous in the north and west, where the Celts of Wales and Cumbria had as little power of resistance to the mail-clad knights as the Slavs of Silesia or the Letts of Livonia had to the chivalry of Germany. Thus it was that numerous boroughs were called into being to receive the laws of Breteuil, an obscure town on the Norman-French border, just as the outposts of Germany in the east had been granted the laws of Magdeburg. The western towns, the oldest Welsh towns, and many Irish towns arose in this manner. But few of the Norman foundations of this type attained much success, and none, so far as I know, give evidence of mediæval town planning. We must wait for the thirteenth century before we get that in England. But before we deal with thirteenth century examples in our own land, let us turn to France, the one continental country that was in intimate connexion with ourselves all through the middle ages, and which, both as friend and foe, profoundly modified the course of our national history.

During the twelfth century the French monarchy became as powerful as the German kingdom under the Saxons and Salian rulers had ever been. It remained surrounded by a ring of vassal states, whose lords were powerful magnates, like the Duke of Normandy, the Duke of Aquitaine or the Count of Toulouse. Each of these was as competent, within his sphere, to maintain order and uphold good-peace as the King of Paris himself. Between the overlord and the great feudatories there was natural enmity and a constant struggle for supremacy. In the long run the Crown prevailed, and even in the south, where men spoke a different tongue and thought different thoughts from the

Frenchmen of the north, the Crown ultimately acquired ascendancy. The conquest of the south by the northern kings was facilitated by the fact that the south, especially the district of which Toulouse was the capital, had adopted the outspoken heresies of the Albigensians. This enabled a crusade to be preached against the Languedocian heretics, and the conquest of the south was made possible by the crusaders from the north who came to fight, alike for the faith and for themselves. When the south was subdued after a bloody struggle, it lay open to northern exploitation. Thus, ere the thirteenth century was very old, a land depopulated and exhausted by war, rich in resources, and sullenly hostile to its conquerors, was ready for the victor to work his will on.

There were towns of great antiquity, populous and wealthy, in the conquered south, but these had for the most part won for themselves a municipal independence which still survived the conquest and made them as hostile as, and more effective than, the beaten nobles to resist the newcomers. Here we have the conditions of the Slavonic lands after the German Conquest, or of Britain after the Norman Conquest essentially repeated, save only that here the conqueror was not only stronger but ruder than his victims, and that the vanquished land was full of flourishing and populous cities. The remedy was the same as on the eastern marches of Germany. From the wholesale and long-continued application of this remedy arose the *villeneuves* and *bastides* of Southern France, the best examples of town planning known to the middle ages.

The word *bastide*, which in Northern France takes the form of *bastille*, means simply a fortress. Here, as in the far east and in the far north, the primary motive for the new foundation was military. Some *bastides* were set upon the frontiers as barrier fortresses. Others were erected over against an old town likely to give the new lords trouble. All were possible refuges to the countryside, when invasion or civil war came. But the economic motive loomed large from the first. It paid a lord to attract settlers and traders to his own town, and to divert commerce from the towns which were self-governing or subject to his rivals. Though *bastides* were strewn so thickly over the map that only a small proportion became real towns, yet the rarity of success mattered the less since



II. Vilna

(From Braun & Hohenberg: "Civitates orbis terrarum". *Cologne*, 1612-17)

the profits of success were great, and the risks of failure were inconsiderable.

The origin of the *bastides* of Languedoc is to be found in the days before the northern conquest when monasteries, possessing large tracts of lands and no tenants to till them, attracted settlers to their estates by setting up little fortresses for them to live in and investing the inhabitants with modest immunities. The greatest princes of the south, the Counts of Toulouse, followed this policy on a larger scale, and thus everything was easy when St. Louis, King of France and his brother Alfonse, Count of Poitiers, the inheritors of the results of the northern conquest of Languedoc, became the pioneers of a more conscious movement towards town plantation. On that part of the spoils of Languedoc which fell to the king himself, St. Louis set up new towns of his own. The rest of the country of Toulouse went to Alfonse of Poitiers, the son-in-law and successor of the last native Count of Toulouse, and in this region he worked on the same lines as his brother as a founder of *bastides*. If the great king's *bastides* were the more enduring and important, those of Alfonse were by far the more numerous. In a later generation, subsequent kings of France inherited both brothers' work, and carried on their policy of town making. Their example was followed by all the remaining feudal potentates of the south, notably by our Edward I, who in early manhood received from Henry III the Duchy of Gascony to support his state, and who, even before he was King of England, stepped into the place left vacant by Alfonse's death in 1270, as the most active founder of *bastides* of his age.

Whoever was the builder, the *bastides* were devised after the same fashion. A site was procured, either on the founder's own lands, or more often by arrangement with some local lord or prelate, who would gladly surrender some of his nominal rights over an unprofitable estate on the chance of its being protected and developed by co-operation between him and his powerful suzerain. When the site was got, a name was chosen. Sometimes it suggested the novelty of the experiment,[1] sometimes the liberties promised to the colonists,[2] sometimes the security it offered,[3] sometimes a special feature of its

[1] Villeneuve. [2] Villefranche.
[3] Sauveterre, Salvatierra, La Sauve, Le Salvetat, Monségur, La Garde.

site,[1] sometimes the name of its founder,[2] sometimes a famous town of a distant region that made some special appeal to the projector,[3] always something either rather conventional or slightly bizarre. Then the founder or his agent set up a pale[4] to mark the central point of the new settlement.

Then the town planning began. When the ground allowed it, a rectangular or square site was selected as the easiest to arrange.[5] But though this was the normal shape, we have *bastides* of all sorts of eccentric outlines, as for example the exceedingly irregular Sauveterre de Guienne, shaped almost like a pear.[6] In any case the new town was protected always by a wall and ditch, rarely by a citadel or castle in addition. Any such defensive works were commonly erected at the charge of the founder. The fortifications and the site were in fact the chief contributions of the founder to the making of the town. Whatever the general outline of the *bastide*, the internal dispositions were always on the same principles.[7] Each new town was plotted out in squares or oblongs, by straight streets, crossing each other at right angles, the main thoroughfares leading direct from the chief gates to the centre of the town. Here the important arteries of traffic, the *carrières*, or carriage ways, met together in a central square, the streets themselves being often carried across each side of the square under arcades formed by a projection of the first floors of the surrounding houses, though in other cases the covered arcades which were a

[1] Mirande, Miranda, Beaumont, Mirabel, Miramont, Montjoie, Aigues Mortes.

[2] Libourne (Roger of Leybourne), Nicole (Henry of Lacy, Earl of Lincoln), La Bastide de Baa (Bishop Burnell of Bath), Beaumarchés (Eustace of Beaumarchais, seneschal of Philip III).

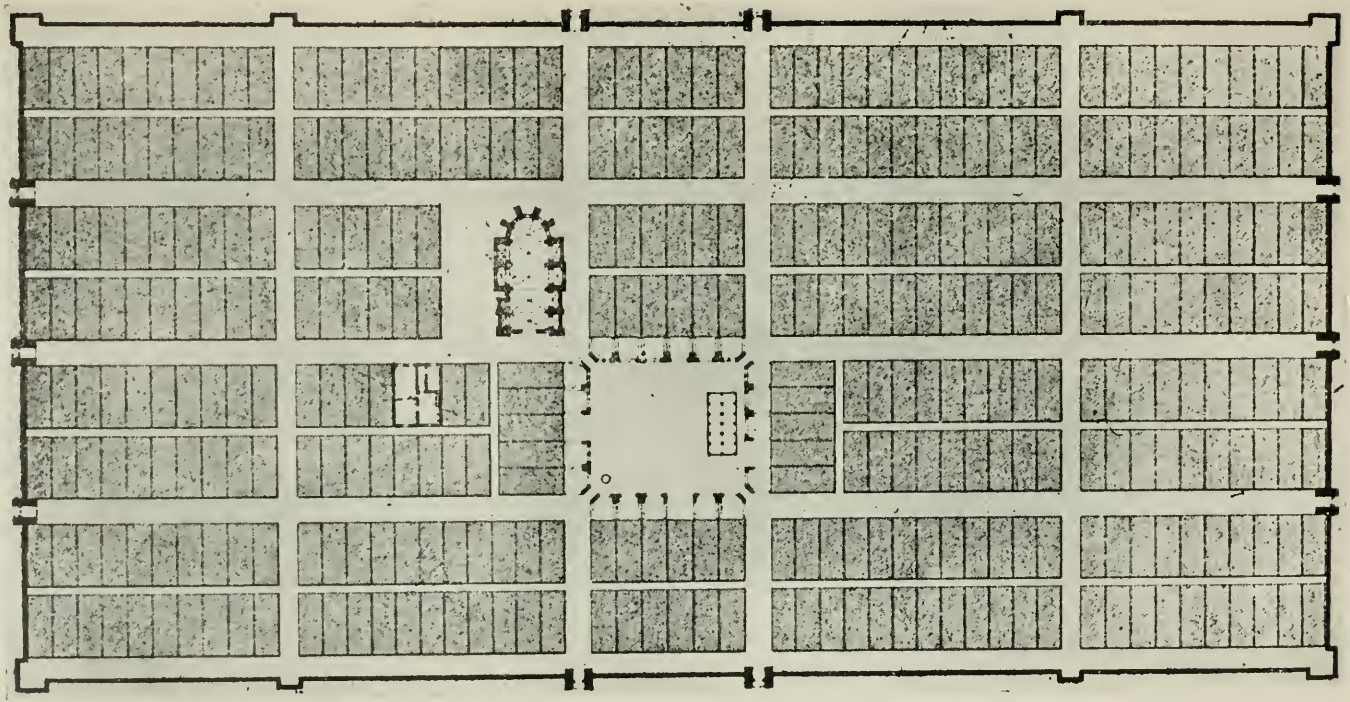
[3] Cordes, Grenade, Hastingues, Pampelonne, Cologne, Plaisance, Fleurance, Barcelonne, Boulogne.

[4] Hence the "new town" of Pau (le pal) which became later the capital of Béarn.

[5] This is best illustrated at Montpazier, see the plan and description in Didron, *Annales Archéologiques*, reproduced in plate III. See also plate IV of Cadillac (Gironde).

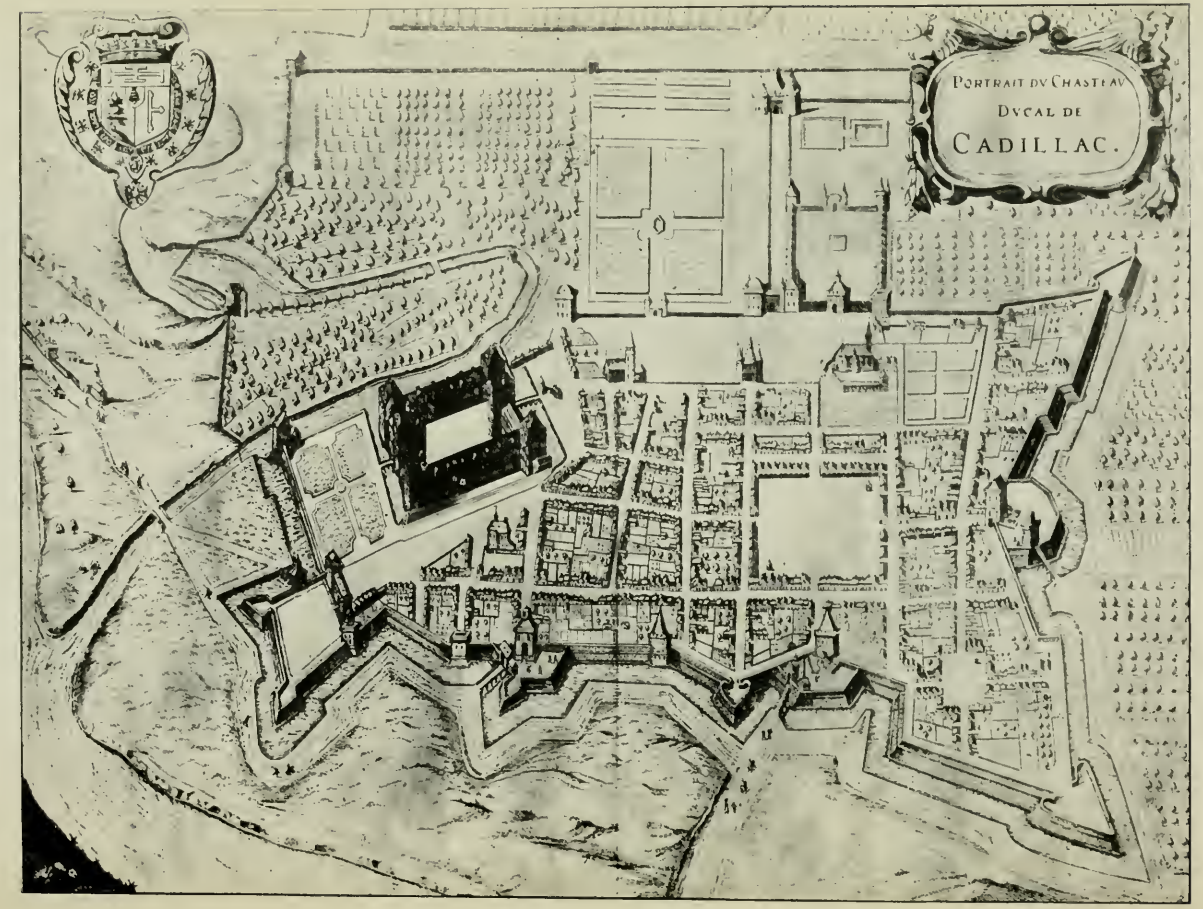
[6] See its plan in Haverfield, *Ancient Town Planning*, p. 144.

[7] This is well seen in the plan of Beaumont in Périgord (Dep. Dordogne), figured in Didron, *Annales Archéologiques*, VI. 78, where the restricted dimensions of the low plateau on which the little *bastide* was erected compelled all the blocks of houses to be arranged askew. For other analogous irregularities see the plan of Ste. Foy in *ibid.* X. 270.



III. Montpazier (Dordogne)

(From Didron: "Annales archéologiques". XII. *Paris*, 1852)



IV. CADILLAC (GIRONDE)

(From Braun & Hohenberg: "Civitates orbis terrarum". *Cologne*, 1612-17)

general feature of the central piazza were of more restrained proportions. In the area of the square the chief public building, the town hall, was commonly placed, the ground floor, open at the sides, being used as a covered market place, while business was transacted in rooms raised above it on pillars. This plan is still to be seen in the few surviving ancient town halls of smaller boroughs in our own country, notably in the west of England. Round about the square the principal inhabitants erected their houses in the most convenient and open sites available for them. Hard by the chief square was a smaller square wherein the parish church was placed. Lesser churches and minor public buildings were scattered through the town according to accident.

Each settler received a block of land, wherein to erect his dwelling. Behind it was generally ample space for a garden. The obligation to build a house at his own expense was the chief pledge of the good faith and financial stability of the settler. In new societies, where there was little social disparity, each house-allotment was of similar size, as rectilineal in shape as everything else in the *bastide*. But it looks as if important people often got several allotments assigned to them, as was certainly the case in the English and Welsh towns formed after this model. It was carefully stipulated by the founder that the settlers' houses should be run up within a reasonable period. Thus in one group of *bastide* charters [1] one-third of the house was to be finished within the first year, and two-thirds within the second year. If this were done, the structure could be completed at the proprietor's discretion. But every householder was bound to build over the whole street-front of his allotment, and sometimes also a minimum breadth of the house, backwards from street to garden, was also stipulated. As the normal townsman was still primarily a cultivator, every settler received a grant of arable and pasture land, sometimes too an orchard or vineyard, in the neighbourhood of the town. These had been waste lands in many cases, and were now to be brought into cultivation by the labour of the new population thus attracted to the soil. As an inducement towards cutting down woodland and turning it into agricultural land, *bastide* builders were allowed

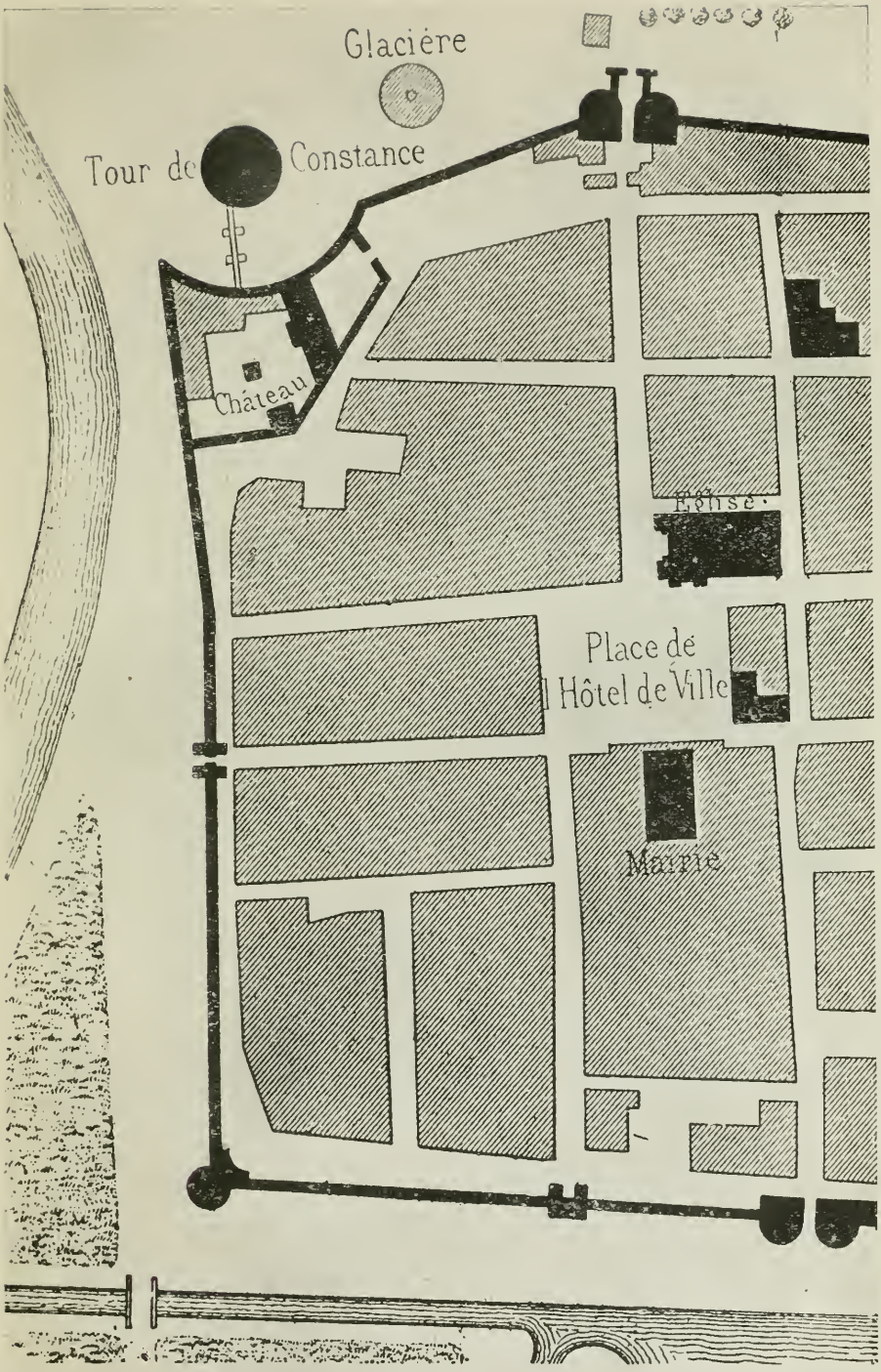
[1] See the Charter of Saint Osbert in the diocese of Bazas in *Rôles Gascons*, II. 13 (1276). This clause was repeated in the Charter of Sauveterre, Gironde, *ibid.* II. 200.

to take from the lord's forest the timber from which their houses were mainly constructed.[1]

The whole scheme was on a small scale. The main roads are to us excessively narrow, but the middle ages seldom used carts and carriages, and there was no problem of traffic congestion to be faced. Moreover in a southern climate narrow streets shaded the burgesses from the sun and protected them from the icy winds which are the least pleasant form of the southern winter. The side streets were mere lanes, accessible at the best to a pack-horse or mule; at the worst only traversable by the pedestrian.

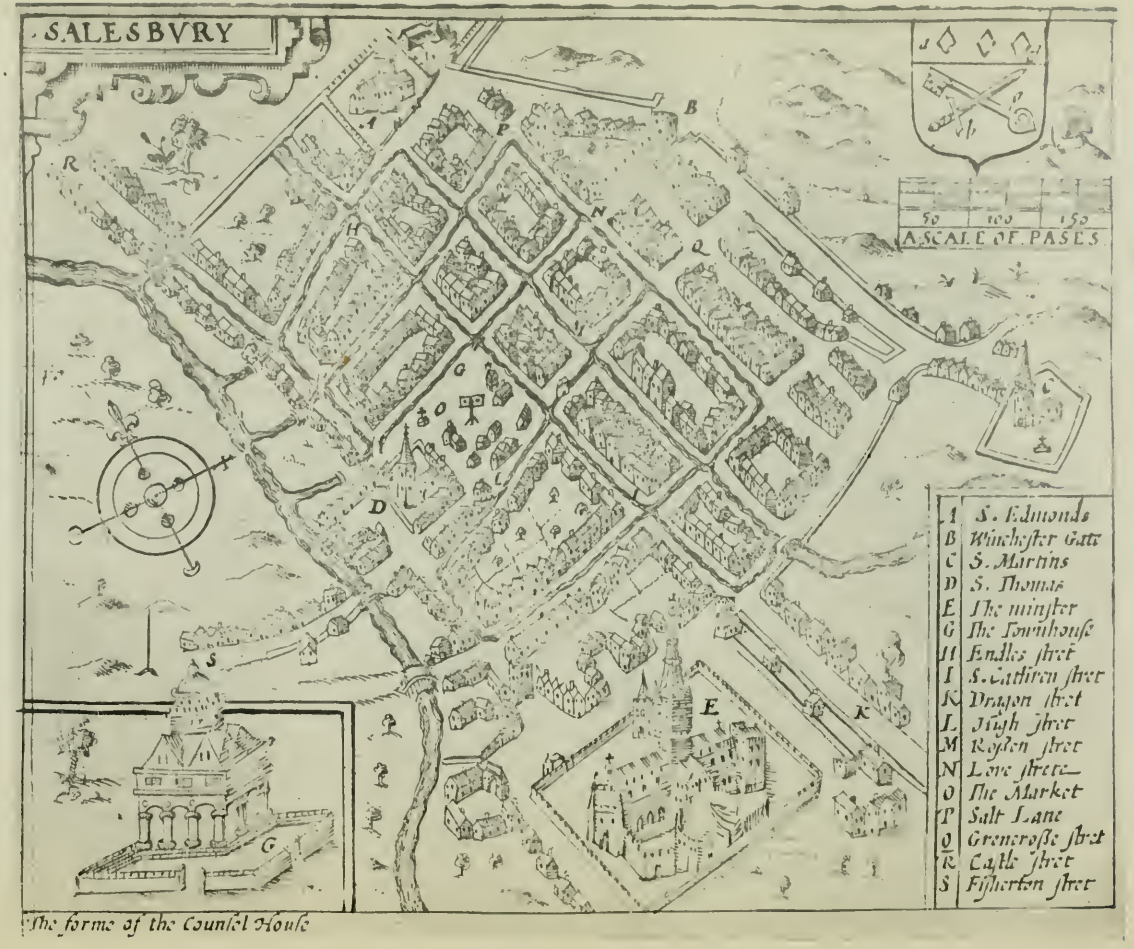
The *bastide*, even nowadays, is a picturesque place with a local colour and atmosphere of its own. It is nearly always small; partly because mediæval conditions made large towns almost impossible, and partly because *bastide*-founding was so easy that so many were set up as to make it out of the question for as many as one in ten to become even a modest success. Some *bastides* have disappeared altogether. We are ignorant even of the sites of several of the ring of *bastides*, of which the *bastide* of Bath was one, which surrounded Bordeaux, doubtless with the object of destroying the commerce and humbling the pride of the self-governing and rebellious capital. When it has continued its existence till now, the ordinary successful *bastide* remains a sleepy little place for all its old-world charm. You can bicycle or motor along the excellent roads of South-Western France, and see them by the score; but when you have sampled half a dozen or so, you have no real need to pursue your travels any farther, since all are very much alike. The typical modern *bastide* is at the best a "chef lieu de canton," a little market town of perhaps a couple of thousand or less inhabitants. The larger agglomeration which has sprung from *bastides* is represented by the "chef lieu d'arrondissement," a place running perhaps up to a population of ten thousand. Such is Edward I's foundation of Libourne, a flourishing borough owing its prosperity to its magnificent site of the confluence of the Isle with the Dordogne, up which the small ships of the middle ages came, laden with corn or wool from England, to receive their return cargo of wine for the island

[1] A convenient general treatise on *bastides* is that of A. Curie-Seimbres, *Essai sur les Bastides* (Toulouse: Privat, 1880). It may be brought up to date by the excellent article on *bastides* by A. Giry in *La Grande Encyclopédie*.



V. Aigues Mortes (Gard) (Western Half)

(From Didron: "Annales archéologiques". X. *Paris*, 1856)



VI. Salisbury (Seventeenth Century)

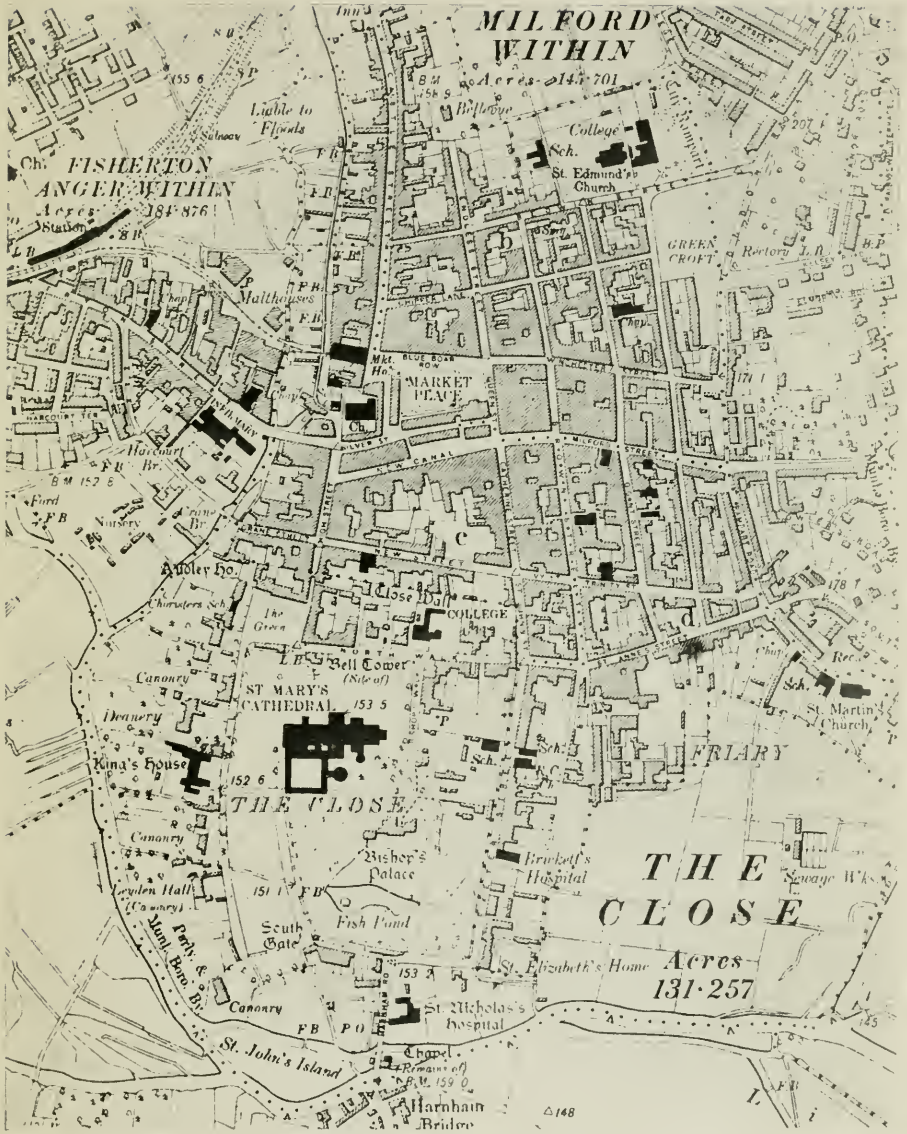
(From Speed: "Theatre of . . . Great Britaine". *London*, 1676)

market. Such too is Alfonse of Poitiers' most successful *bastide*, Villefranche de Rouergue. Of the two great foundations of St. Louis Aigues Mortes is a bustling little place enough, much more active than the sleepy *bastides* farther west, but it never succeeded in being the great Mediterranean port that its founder designed it to be, and therefore its massive walls and magnificent castle have been suffered to remain to this day, the finest specimen of a mediæval walled town in the world, its beauty enhanced by the dreary waste of sand, marsh, flat meadow and stagnant waters that encompass it. A more prosperous history has attended the "new town" of Carcassonne, which St. Louis also established as a commercial borough, leaving the old "city" of Carcassonne on its fortified height beyond the Aude as the abode of the clergy serving its churches and the soldiers guarding the noble ring of fortifications that make the *cité* of Carcassonne as unique among the fortified cities set on hills as Aigues Mortes is among the towns established in the plain. Yet from the thirteenth to the twentieth century the "ville" of Carcassonne attracted to itself all the life of the *cité*. In the middle ages the "new town" owed its size and prosperity to its cloth industry; in our own days it is the flourishing capital of the department of the Aude. But it still retains the town plan designed for it by the officers of St. Louis when they first measured out its streets and staked off its building lots in the years immediately succeeding 1248.

I have mentioned Edward I as an active founder of *bastides* in France, and it would seem natural now to turn from foreign instances and ask how far town planning was extended by him or others into the England which he was soon called upon to rule. I have already shown that after the Norman Conquest there was a good deal of town founding, and probably town planning, on a modest scale in Britain. But with the establishment of the strong centralized monarchy, which resulted from the Conquest, the chief need for this passed away. The reign of law was real enough to make it unnecessary for the cultivator to seek, like his foreign counterpart, for a home within the walls of a privileged borough, and there were no wildernesses, desolated by war, crying aloud for new towns to protect the farmers enticed to till the neighbouring lands. There were few frontiers to defend or invaders to drive out. There were, moreover, no English towns, not even London, with privileges so strong that, like the cities of

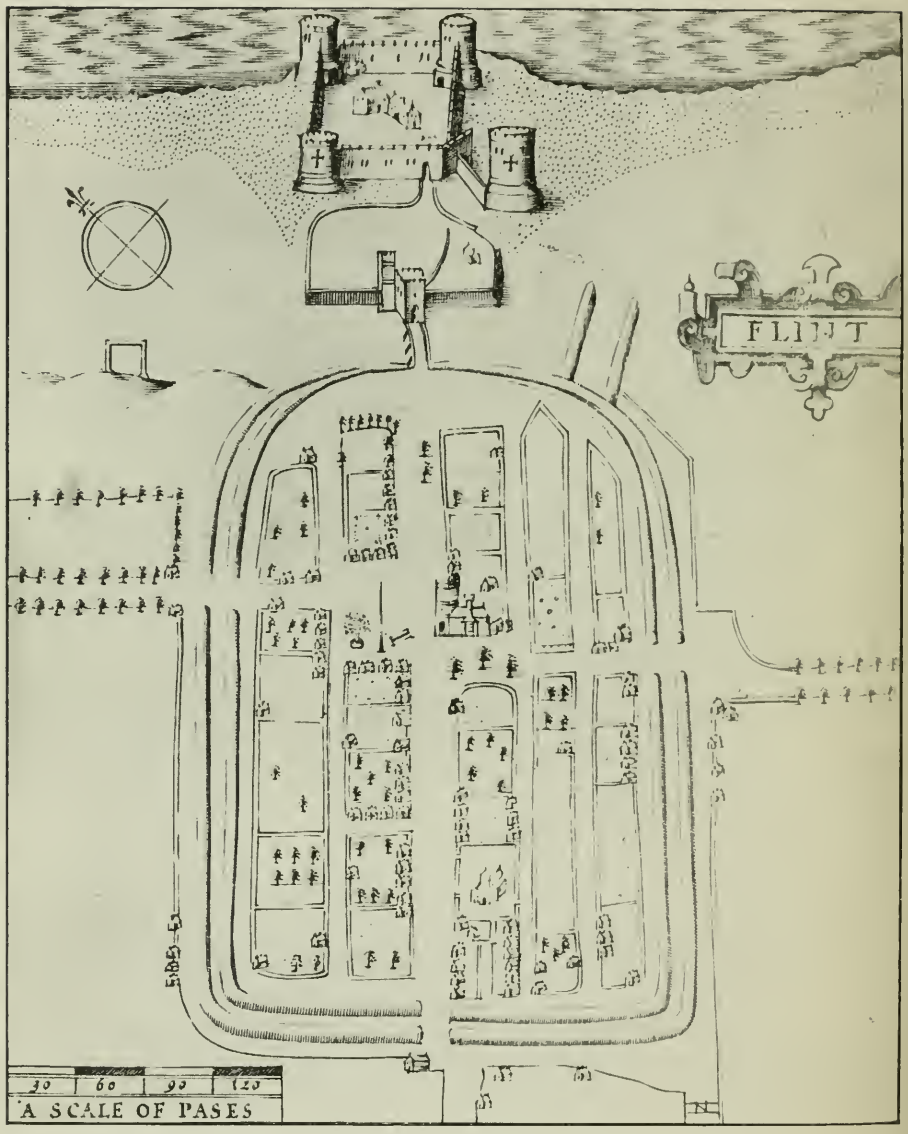
Gascony and Languedoc, they could tempt kings and princes to set up rivals over against them. It was enough then for England that from time to time villages should receive the modest privileges of a country borough from the king or their immediate lords. But neither the process which in our own neighbourhood gave charters to Salford, Manchester, and Stockport, nor the extension by charter of wider privileges to the greater cities involved much town founding or any town planning. Towns, "Newtowns," as they were often called, were set up, and one of these was Liverpool, which started on its career as a foundation of King John, who, when still only Count of Mortain, set it up as a port for the lands between the Ribble and Mersey of which he was then the lord. But there is no evidence of town planning, and it is unlikely that any systematic laying out was attempted. It required something exceptional for mediæval England to witness a town deliberately planned. Such exceptions occurred now and then in the case of an individual town; they once arose in relation to a great district. We can, therefore, illustrate the accidental foundation of an exceptional town from the case of the foundation of new Salisbury early in the reign of Henry III, and the comparatively wholesale foundation of towns by the real *bastides* in North Wales, set up when the fall of the last native Welsh prince secured direct possession of his dominions by Edward I, under circumstances that tempted the monarch to establish in Wales *bastides* with a hand only less lavish than that which had scattered new towns over Gascony. Later in his reign Edward also set up two new towns in England itself. From these thirteenth century examples, all involving town planning as well as town foundation, we can illustrate the extent which our own land took part in the systematic laying out of new towns during our period. New Salisbury, the *bastides* of North Wales, the English *bastides* of Hull and New Winchelsea must now engage our attention.

Old Salisbury, or Old Sarum, as it is generally called, was a typical hill town, wherein a castle, a cathedral, and the houses of the inhabitants were crowded within the narrow compass of the flat summit of a steep mount. By the thirteenth century the cramped site was too small for its motley population, which complained, moreover, that there was no water and too much wind on its bleak height. Two miles to the south the bishops possessed a rich stretch of meadow land watered by the Avon. Already many citizens had sought more



VII. Salisbury (Modern)

(From "The Ordnance Survey of England and Wales")



VIII. Flint (Seventeenth Century)

(From Speed: "Theatre of . . . Great Britaine". *London*, 1676)

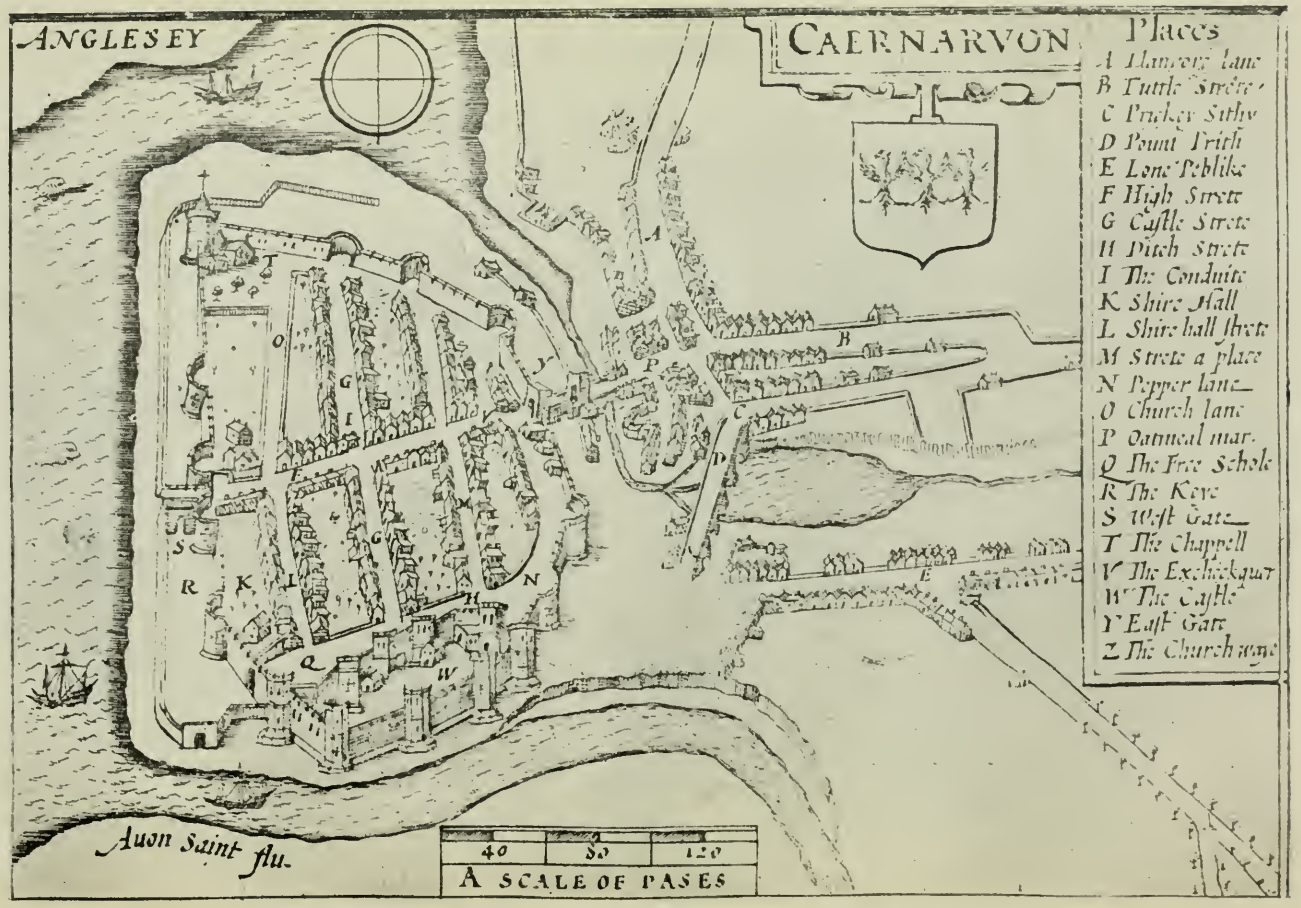
commodious quarters in the plain, when in 1220 Bishop Richard le Poer resolved to transfer his cathedral there. The first stone of the new church was laid, and ample space was left round it for the green close which is still one of the glories of the new Salisbury of the plain. To the south the bishop's palace was also set in great gardens while to the north the bishop planned a new city, big enough to entice the men of Old Sarum to desert their overcrowded upland, and attractive enough to tempt traders and settlers from every side, and in particular to take away the trade of the flourishing borough of Wilton some three miles to the west. The same large ideas that inspired the erection of cathedral, close, and palace, induced the bishop to lay out his new city on an ample scale. Its straight-cut roads and chess-board plan of allotments showed that as early as 1220 the *bastide* type was quite well recognized and willingly adopted, though we must not suppose conscious imitation of either ancient or foreign models. Indeed the streets were wider than most ancient or mediæval towns, notably more spacious than the lower town of Carcassonne, built thirty years later, and its nearest continental counterpart. But in England there was no great need for fortifications. A "deep and strong" ditch, diverted from the Avon, afforded such sufficient protection on the north and east sides that the citizens never troubled themselves to build the wall they were authorized to construct. On other sides the Avon itself was a sufficient bulwark. Within, the "fair streets" excited the admiration of the traveller Leland[1] when he visited the place over three centuries later ; and in particular he was pleased at the "little streamlets" running down every street, which are still a frequent feature of the modern city. Leland admired too the market place, set out after the *bastide* fashion in the centre of the city, "very fair and large and well watered with a running streamlet," having in one corner the town hall "strongly builded of stone" and in another the chief parish church. By 1227 new Salisbury had arisen so far that a royal charter gave all the liberties of Winchester and the privileges of a "free city" to the bishop's new venture. Ere long Old Sarum was deserted save by the castle garrison, and Edward III allowed the dean and canons to use the Norman cathedral on the height as a quarry for stones to repair the most homogeneous and best planned of English cathedrals, which lay beyond the greatest triumph of town

[1] Leland, *Itinerary*, I. 258-9, ed. L. T. Smith.

planning that mediæval England saw. Before long the great western road was diverted from its steep course up and down Old Sarum hill, and conducted through the bishop's new city. This drove away traffic from Wilton and soon transferred the commerce of the eponymous borough of the Wilsaetas to its modern rival. Irritated at the loss of customers, the men of Wilton strove to force traders of the district to attend their markets and there, and there only, expose their goods for sale. But beating and bullying merchants is not in the long run a good way of attracting trade. In a few generations Wilton became the tiny townlet that it still remains, its life blood having been almost as much absorbed into Salisbury as that of Old Sarum itself.

The foundation of new Salisbury was based on purely ecclesiastical and economic motives. It was necessary to find room and comfort for clergy and traders in a well-planned city of the plain. The unimportant castle could safely remain on the hill. It was otherwise with the new towns which Edward I established in North Wales after the fall of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd. In each case alike continental parallels force themselves upon our attention. If Salisbury anticipates Carcassonne, the Edwardian towns in Wales exactly reproduce the conditions of the many *bastides* that Edward I had delighted to set up in Gascony. Here, as in Aquitaine, the military motive was supreme, and second to it was the economic motive emphasized by the desire of the Englishman, already rather a "superior person," to teach "civility" to the "wild Welsh" by the stimulating example of the English soldiers, traders, and clergy whose business was to direct them, not necessarily too gently, in the right way. No Welshman need apply for burgess-ship of towns which were meant for "good Englishmen" only. These latter were attracted into exile just as in Gascony, by town lots, large grants of lands to till outside the walls, a monopoly of the commerce of the district, and as many economic and social privileges as were compatible with the military unity of the borough. There was always a castle with a permanent garrison. The constable of this castle was *ex officio* mayor of the little borough to which it stood as its citadel. As there was nothing, either then or later, to make such towns very large, the tourist can still study their plan, walls, and castles, much as they were devised by their town planners.

Let us begin at Flint, a place which had not even a name in



IX. Carnarvon (Seventeenth Century)

(From Speed: "Theatre of . . . Great Britaine". *London*, 1676)

1277,[1] but which a few years later was a flourishing *bastide*, the shire town of the new dependent county of Flint, which became a sort of Welsh extension of Edward's own Cheshire palatinate. Though modern industrialism has reared its hideous head all around, we can still make out the line of the streets, drawn at right angles from each other and leading up to the castle, majestic even in its ruin. A few miles farther west, Rhuddlan shows its castle, but there is little town planning now visible in the village that Edward wished to make a real town, and to which he desired that the Bishop of St. Asaph should transfer his see. But we must cross the Conway to see Edward's Welsh *bastides* at their best, to Conway itself with its glorious castle dominating both river and town. The triangular shape of the borough—the form of a Welsh harp is the "right way" of describing it—has not prevented the geometrical planning of the streets and plots in rectilinear lines. Still better does the *bastide* plan come out in Carnarvon, a town that had more of a future before it, as the capital of North Wales, than its eastern sisters. These are the successes of the Edwardian policy; the failures as in Gascony were even more numerous. Later than 1284 Edward set up a new castellated borough at Beaumaris, others were made by his son, as prince and king; and still others by the Black Prince. Then in England as in Gascony town planning ceased by the middle of the fourteenth century. The king was not the only town founder in Wales. In Southern and Western Wales, the lords marcher continued the policy which had begun in Norman days. Llewelyn himself strove as late as 1273 to set up at Abermule a castle, town and market in rivalry to the castle, town and market of the king at Montgomery.[2]

We are lucky in having more details as to the process by which these Welsh towns were made than we have of many of their continental elder brethren. Nearly every point that I have mentioned already as regards the Gascon group was reproduced in the North Welsh variety of the same type. The similarity of plan applied not only to the general outline but to the detailed plots assigned to the individual settlers. The "placeæ" of Gascony are reproduced, even in name,

[1] See for this J. G. Edwards, "The Name of Flint Castle" in *English Historical Review*, XXIX. 315 (1914).

[2] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1272-9, p. 51.

in the little borough of Newborough in Anglesea, a foundation of Edward II, but they are more generally known as "burgages". A comparison between the two groups will show that, while at Carnarvon and Criccieth the individual "burgage" was 80 × 60 feet, at Beaumaris there was the same length but only half the breadth, namely 40 feet. The charters of a group of Gascon towns of which that of Sauveterre de Guienne is first, assigned the settlers "places" of 24 × 72 feet,[1] while at Valence d'Agen the places were either 24 × 60 or 36 × 60.[2] It is not likely that a "foot" of exactly the same length was used in Gascony and England, but even allowing for this it is clear that the Gascon "place" was a smaller allotment than the north Welsh "burgage". It naturally, therefore, paid a much lower rent. But the mass of the *bastides* were not likely to become more than agricultural villages, and the north Welsh towns were to be peopled by a dominant race, drawn from a distance and needing more inducement to accept the painful, if sometimes profitable, rôle of posing as pioneers of an alien civilization. In the same way any reputable person, serfs included, were welcomed in a *bastide*, while the Welsh borough was limited to free Englishmen, Jews, like Welshmen, being forbidden all entrance.

An essential element in town planning is the selection of a good site on which a new foundation has a chance of attaining greatness. The Gascon *bastides* were scattered too thickly to make their positions anything but matters of accident, though sometimes, as in the case of Libourne, Edward or his agents showed a real eye for a site, marked out by nature for an important town. The maturer work of Edward in North Wales may well claim to have been distinguished by insight in the selection of good localities for potential towns. The nameless rock, or "the Flint," where Edward's earliest foundation arose, commanded the estuary of the lower Dee. Rhuddlan was the head of the navigation of the Clwyd. It prospered greatly until the increase in the size of ships, and the silting up of the river left the borough high and dry, so that the suggestion that the deserted village was ever a seaport seems to modern visitors ridiculous. The advantage of the site of Conway, dominating the passage of a broad river and providing access from the further bank to the mountain of Snowdonia, and the attractions of Carnarvon and Beaumaris, protecting the two

[1] *Rôles Gascon*, II. 13, 201. [2] *Ibid.* II. 209.

X. Hull (Seventeenth Century)

(From an engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, *c.* 1665)

banks of the Menai Straits, are obvious on the face of things. And that Edward took pains with his choice of sites is clear from the trouble lavished and the misunderstandings faced when he chose as the site of Conway the hallowed Cistercian monastery which was the favourite foundation of the Welsh princes, with the result that he was compelled to provide a new home for the monks higher up the stream in a position of less military and economic importance. When a bad site was chosen, such as that of Bere amidst a wilderness of hills in Merioneth, the town simply never came into existence. We may perhaps claim for Edward a touch of that instinct in choosing town sites which is a rarer gift for the town planner that the mechanical measuring out of straight lines and right angles in plotting the roads and "burgages" within the walls. To see this gift in perfection we must go back to the two great town planners of antiquity who have left their names in the Egyptian Alexandria and in Constantinople.

The same insight marked Edward I's work on the rare occasions when, after the conquest of Gwynedd, he had an opportunity to plan new towns in his own English realm. Among his claims to fame is his foundation of Hull, or to give it its full title the Kingstown on the Hull, with Liverpool one of the very few of the greater historic towns of England that can boast, or lament, a founder. Two events had drawn Edward to the North. There was the Scottish trouble, which demanded his best efforts after 1290 and brought him and the whole machinery of state to York for years on end. There was also the lapse to the Crown of the inheritance of the earls of Albemarle, whose great lordship of Holderness was thus made royal domain. Now the old port of Holderness was Ravenser, now buried beneath the sea, and already dropping by degrees into the muddy Humber. With the view of providing a successor to Ravenser, and a port more accessible from York and the interior, Edward chose a site where the little river Hull pours its waters into the Humber. The angle between the two rivers, just west of the Hull and north of the Humber, belonged to the monks of the neighbouring monastery of Meaux, and its advantages had already brought a few houses, ships and traders to the spot.[1] But

[1] *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1281-92, pp. 270, 278, 354, and *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1288-96, pp. 9, 101, 261, show that there was some population and trade at Wyke before 1290 and that it was sometimes called Hull. In 1279 the monks of Meaux had a charter permitting a weekly market at Wyke (*Cal. Charter Rolls*, II. 214).

about February, 1293, Wyke, as it was then called, was a humble enough place, and it was therefore not hard for Edward to negotiate its exchange for other lands.[1] Once secure of the coveted position, he immediately set forth to found a new town upon it. Four months after the transfer, he gave Wyke the new name of the Kingstown on the Hull, and proclaimed two weekly markets there. A deviation of the Hull[2] gave it water protection on all sides, and provided for our own age a complete ring of docks, round the nucleus of the modern city. It was a new Libourne in a colder and flatter land. The site was laid out with Aquitanian regularity and the vast offices and warehouses that in the modern town now take up the narrow space between the docks and the Humber, and are still grouped round Edward's great church of the Holy Trinity, cannot altogether conceal from the historic tourist the fact that the oldest part of the modern town still follows the lines of a normal *bastide*, with its chess-board pattern, and its central market square on which abuts its chief church. A feature in the construction was that it was the first English town in which brick was the chief building material, much of Trinity Church, all the town gates, and many of the houses being, then or later, built of bricks.[3] By 1299 the time was ripe for a royal charter constituting Kingston a "free borough" with extensive franchises.[4] So thoroughly did Edward provide for the needs of the new port that, like the bishops of Salisbury, he diverted and constructed high roads to give access to it.[5] By a master-stroke of policy he enticed the chief merchant of Ravenser, William de la Pole, to throw his interest into Kingston by granting him the manor of Myton, included in the King's purchase

[1] *Chron. de Melsa*, II. 186-92, tells the story from the Meaux point of view.

[2] *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1288-96, p. 292. This order of 1 July, 1293, to proclaim throughout Yorkshire the holding of two markets a week in the "King's town of Kingston-on-Hull" is the first evidence of the new name that I have come across.

[3] Leland, *Itinerary*, I. 49-50, ed. L. T. Smith.

[4] It is in *Cal. Charter Rolls*, II. 475-6, dated 1 April, 1299. Ravenser was compensated by a duplicate charter, issued the same day (*ibid.* p. 476).

[5] See *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1301-7, p. 191, instruction of 16 May, 1303, to royal officers, appointed to survey and arrange the roads to the new town of Kingston-on-Hull, to inquire where it will most benefit the town and merchants for roads to be made, and whether on the king's land or on that of others.

from Meaux. There Pole erected a stately mansion which, until their migration to London in the next generation, became the headquarters of the first great house of merchant princes known to mediæval England. Pole's son, another William, became first Mayor of Hull in 1322. The identification of the Pole family with the royal foundation secured the thorough exploitation of the King's favour and the natural advantages of its position. When a century later Ravenser was swallowed up by the sea, Hull stood without a rival among the ports between Newcastle and Lynn.

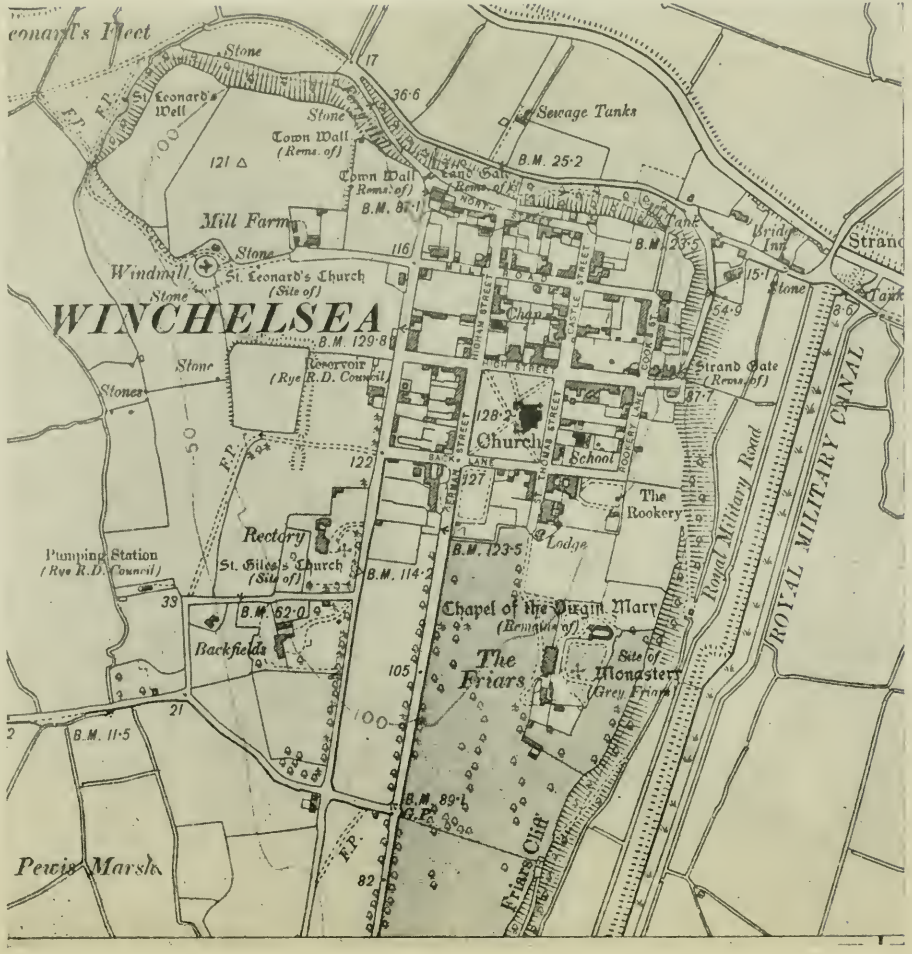
In southern England another famous port was already enduring the fate that was soon to be meted out to Ravenser. This was Winchelsea, or more precisely Old Winchelsea, a town then situated on a low cliff off the East Sussex coast, which had long been crumbling into the sea, and over whose site nowadays the German submarine may perchance have torpedoed many a harmless merchant-ship. After vain efforts to prop up the old town,[1] Edward encouraged its still prosperous inhabitants to change bodily the site of their borough. He chose for their new home the wooded hill of Iham. This eminence rose steeply above the broad estuary then formed by the river Brede so that the site, though raised above all danger of flood, was accessible for sea-going craft and easily defensible. It lay some three miles north-west of Old Winchelsea. As early as 1280 Edward directed his steward to obtain by purchase or exchange land at Iham suitable for the new town.[2] In 1281 he nominated Stephen of Penchester, Itier of Angoulême and Henry le Waleys to assess certain "places," that is "burgages" or building sites, and to let them for building at a fixed rent to the "barons and good men" of Winchelsea.[3] Penchester, more properly called Penshurst,[4] was warden of the Cinque Ports, and it is significant that the second commissioner, Itier, was a Gascon of wide experience in *bastide* building, while the third, Henry le Waleys, was a great London merchant with close Gascon connexions, who had been mayor of Bordeaux as well as of London.

[1] For instance, *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1272-81, p. 151.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 144. [3] *Ibid.* 1281-92, p. 3.
[4] Stephen was called Penchester by contemporaries, but so was the place now called Penshurst in Kent, which gave him his name, where he lived and was buried. It is better therefore to call him by the modern form of the place name.

Yet all these efforts remained for two or three years fruitless. It looks as if the king tried to drive too hard a bargain with the men of Old Winchelsea, and that they were too wary to accept his first offers. Anyhow in 1284 a fuller commission was appointed with greater powers and discretion. In this Penshurst and Waleys were associated with Gregory of Rokesley, the actual mayor of London, to "plan and assess the new town of Iham which the king is ordering to be built there for the barons of Winchelsea, as that town is already in great part submerged by the sea and is in danger of total submersion". The commissioners were to "plan and give directions" for the necessary streets and lanes, for places suitable for a market, and for two churches to be dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Giles, the patron saints of the two parishes in the old town. They were also to assign and deliver to the said "barons" of Winchelsea competent "places," or building sites, according to their requirements.[1] In these minute directions we have the most detailed evidence of conscious town planning by royal authority that the age was to witness. Note also that the king still kept the site in his own hands.

How far Penshurst and the two Londoners discharged their mission is not known. But it looks as if the "barons" clung as long as they could to their old abodes, the more so as they may still have been afraid of entrusting themselves to the absolute control of the royal lord of the new borough. However in 1287, when Edward was in Gascony, a mighty inundation threatened to sweep away the waterlogged remnants of Old Winchelsea, and after that no more delay was possible. One of Edward's strongest ministers, John Kirkby, Bishop of Ely, the treasurer, was, either now or earlier, assigned to the "ordering" of the new town.[2] But he seems to have thought that the best way of getting the thing done was to let the persons chiefly concerned have a preponderating share in the management of the new venture. Accordingly in 1288 the regency, of which Kirkby was perhaps the leading spirit, handed over Iham hill to the "barons of Winchelsea," save some ten acres reserved for the king's use. On their taking up their abodes in the new town, they were to enjoy the same liberties that they had had before at Old Winchelsea.[3] The effect of this was that the

[1] *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1281-92, pp. 81-2. [2] *Ibid.* 1301-7, p. 185.
[3] *Cal. Fine Rolls*, I. 249 (23 June, 1288). An earlier cancelled order of 21 June is in *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1279-88, pp. 509-10.



XI. Winchelsea

(From "The Ordnance Survey of England and Wales")

washed-out burgesses were to be secure of their old franchises and to participate in the laying out of the town. From this point onwards the greater liberality of the administration and the growing cruelty of the sea combined to accelerate the progress of the new venture. Iham, now New Winchelsea, was duly laid out into thirty-nine chequers or squares after the fashion of Gascony and Gwynedd. But certain deviations from the normal *bastide* plan, noted by local historians, may perhaps be due to the irregularity of the site and the prejudices of the burgesses, though they are more likely the result of the king's wish to lay out the new nest as much like the old one as possible, to tempt the timid fledglings to take up their quarters in it. Power to wall the town was given to the burgesses.[1] Along the western and only exposed side a moat was drawn. Strong gates, soon to be supplemented by a wall, barred access to the borough. Magnificent churches, friaries, and public buildings arose under the king's own eye. By 1297 New Winchelsea had so far come into being that it could afford accommodation for the embarkation of the great host which Edward led from its harbour to Flanders. As in Hull, Edward made terms with the most active of the local magnates. The house of Alard, who stood to Winchelsea as the Pole family stood to Hull, had already fought in his wars and soon had custody of the town for life. A prosperous future seemed assured, but before very long the sea played almost as cruel a trick on New Winchelsea as it had played on its predecessor. The harbour silted up; the waters retreated leaving the town high and dry on its hill, and looking towards its neighbour Rye over the marshes that now fill up the site of the harbour where ships had once sailed and anchored. New Winchelsea, therefore, ceased to be a port and soon also it ceased to be a town. In the magnificent fragment of St. Thomas' Church, with its matchless series of Alard tombs; in the remaining gates, one standing forlorn in the fields far from human habitation, and above all in the signs of town plots that can still be discerned in land now given over to husbandry—the traveller can still see suggestions of the sometime greatness of the most elaborate scheme of town planning ever devised even by Edward I.

There is another town planning scheme of Edward I, which was perhaps never fully realized, but which nevertheless had some permanent importance in history. As a result of Edward's first con-

[1] *Cal. Patent Rolls*, 1292-1301, p. 147 (1295).

quest of Scotland in 1296, Berwick-on-Tweed, up to that date the chief commercial centre of southern Scotland, fell into his hands. The king had prescience enough to foresee future troubles with Scotland, and we may feel sure that the strategic and commercial advantages of the peninsula site of Berwick, on the tongue of land between the Tweed and the sea, made its appeal to the founder of Libourne, Hull, and Winchelsea. Accordingly he resolved to make it an English town and outpost of English influence. This involved the displacement of the Scottish population and the assignment of their homes to English settlers, to attract whom a new constitution for the town was clearly necessary. For all these objects a wise king thought it prudent to take the best advice he could procure. Accordingly, while on his way south back from his recent conquest, Edward issued writs ordering representatives of the chief towns in England to meet him at Bury St. Edmunds, to which place also a general parliament was summoned for 3 November, 1296. Though many of the towns sent their citizens and burgesses to this assembly, Edward's consultative council, though meeting at the same time and place, was constituted by other persons than those sent to represent the same Constituencies in the Parliament. By a writ of privy seal of 21 September, London was ordered to elect "four wise men of the most knowing and most sufficient who know best how to devise, order and array a new town to the most profit of the king and of merchants". These were to attend at Bury St. Edmunds on the appointed date, and be ready to proceed elsewhere on this business wherever the king may enjoin them to go. We knew exactly how the Londoners carried out the order. There were summoned on 22 October the aldermen and four good men of each ward of the city, and these unanimously selected the four experts in planning new towns who were to help the king in his mysterious and unnamed new venture in town making.[1] Yet this was not all, for three days later more normal writs of summons[2] were issued to twenty-three other cities and boroughs to send to Bury two representatives each, whose

[1] The writ and its return are printed in Palgrave, *Parliamentary Writs*, I. 49; and in *Munimenta Gildhallæ Londoniensis. Liber Castumarum*, II. i. 77-8 (Rolls Ser.).

[2] See *Parl. Writs*, I. 49. These were letters close under the great seal after the usual fashion.

qualifications were described in exactly the same language as in the London writ. We may pause to marvel on the stir it would make nowadays for twenty-four towns, ranging in importance from London to Dunwich, being called upon to produce at a few weeks' notice fifty experts in town planning to help the king to plan a new town! It shows how town planning was in the air, though few of the persons selected had any personal experience in the business save perhaps the two citizens of New Salisbury, who when at home had always before them the great town planning experiment of their grandfathers' days.

Unluckily little came of the deliberations at Bury St. Edmunds. The experts doubtless met, but they settled nothing. Further provisions for advising the king had consequently to be devised. On 15 November Edward summoned from Bury a new assembly to meet him on 2 January, 1297, at whatsoever place in England he might then happen to be.[1] This time the king tore asunder the transparent veil of secrecy which, then as now, seems to be worshipped by statesmen almost for its own sake. The business for this assembly was to advise the king as to a certain ordinance for his town of Berwick-on-Tweed. Moreover the list of towns, called upon to send representatives, was very different, Winchelsea and eight fresh boroughs coming in while Salisbury and twelve others dropped out. Also the selection of experts by public meeting seems not to have been a success—even nowadays it might be a risky method! On this occasion the king nominated the persons he wanted and addressed special writs to them. By this device he at least procured the services of some experts, for he summoned Henry le Waleys, the sometime joint-planner of Winchelsea, now again Mayor of London, and Thomas Alard, Warden of Winchelsea for life, and its leading citizen.

Edward made the business easy by promising that he would not keep the assembly longer from its homes than he could help. It was now summoned to Harwich, whither the king had removed. But when the town planners came on 2 January, if they did come, to Harwich, they seem to have soon shuffled out of their responsibilities, for a fortnight later Edward issued a third set of summonses for another assembly, this time to be held at Berwick itself in April, to which specified representatives of selected towns on the north-east coast from Newcastle to Lynn, with Oxford thrown in rather inexplicably, were to be summoned

[1] *Parl. Writs*, I. 49-50.

through the sheriffs of their respective shires.[1] The only outcome was the resettling of Berwick by Englishmen and the new charter of 1302 which made Berwick a "free borough".[2] I cannot find that any real town planning was attempted, and there is little in the alignments of the modern town to suggest that it was. The important result was the permanent detachment of Berwick from Scotland. Its formal inclusion in England is a thing of our own day.

After the conquest of Calais in 1347, Edward III, following his grandfather's Berwick plans, displaced the French burgesses by English settlers. Here there was real town planning, as the still abiding streets of the old town of Calais, between the railway-station and the sea, continue to testify. But we have now got at the very verge of the golden age of mediæval town planning, whose extreme limits we may put roughly between 1220 and 1350. In the declining middle ages town destruction is more conspicuous than town making; yet enough of the tradition lingered on to survive in some well-planned towns of the sixteenth century, such as Leghorn, and to inspire the Dutch to repeat at Batavia in Java and the English Colonists to revive in North America the rectilineal plans of the middle ages. But, as experts tell us, the first European adventurers found towns planned like chess-boards in Mexico, as they had previously been found in China. You may decide as you will as to how far there was any merit in their doing the obvious thing for sensible men under the circumstances in which they were placed. "Post hoc" is not necessarily "propter hoc," and, just as we must not affiliate the planned towns of the middle ages too meticulously to the planned towns of antiquity, so we must not lay excessive stress on the continuation of the mediæval tradition in modern times. But there is this to be said for the later case of continuity, that there is a continuous history between the mediæval and the modern town which makes us, whether we like it or not, the necessary children of the middle ages. Between the towns of the Romano-Greek world and ourselves, the barbarian invasions have drawn a deep gulf.

Such was mediæval town planning. When we have said about it all that we can, it remains the exception rather than the rule. Only in a few special districts, and under specially favourable conditions did the "new towns," artificially created, become important

[1] *Parl. Writs*, I. 51. [2] *Cal. Charter Rolls*, III. 27-8.

enough to bulk large in history. Even then the successful "new town" was generally something that replaced a former town rather than an entirely new creation, a new Carcassonne on the plain absorbing the business of the old Carcassonne on the hill, a new Winchelsea sedulously following the traditions of the old Winchelsea, swallowed up by the sea, a Kingston-on-Hull carrying on the trade of Ravenser engulphed in the waters of the Humber, an English Berwick and an English Calais continuing the activities of the Scottish Berwick and French Calais. Perhaps we could claim more for the mediæval town planner if we extended our categories and included in our lists new quarters of old towns, planned after approved models, the mediæval equivalents, let us say, of the new town of Edinburgh. Such were the older parts of the lower town of Boulogne-sur-mer, called the *quartier des carreaux* by reason of the mathematical regularity of its rectangular streets and building blocks, a regularity only departed from when the prudent town planner introduced here and there a "lying corner," a *coin menteur*, an artificially devised irregular twist to protect those using its streets from the full force of the wind. Such too was the new quarter of the city of Amiens, to the south of its great cathedral. This district was planned in the fifteenth century on the site of the ancient ramparts demolished at that period in order to extend the circumference of the city.[1] So well was the work done that the chief street of this quarter, the Rue des Trois Cailloux, remains to this day the chief artery of traffic in Amiens, and with the neighbouring streets still retains substantial traces of the town planning activity of its fifteenth century founders. Further examples could easily be given, but these perhaps are enough to illustrate a subsidiary point. Perhaps also the reconstruction of an old town after its destruction by warfare or some natural conversion may well have proceeded on similar lines. We know that after the burning of the lower city of Carcassonne by the Black Prince in 1355, it was rebuilt exactly on the plan laid down by St. Louis. Whether the same happened after Milan was rebuilt when laid waste by Frederick Barbarossa, we have probably no data

[1] For Boulogne and Amiens see C. Enlart, *Manuel d'archéologie française*, II. *Architecture civile et militaire*, pp. 238-40. M. Enlart's section, § II., "fondation et plan de villes," etc., pp. 237-48, contains an excellent summary of the effects of mediæval town planning with interesting illustrations.

to determine. While any such reconstruction would give a good chance for co-operative effort, we must set against it the intense individualism of the mediæval town owner and the comparative ineffectiveness alike of a mediæval army to destroy a solidly built structure and of a mediæval political authority to compel general acceptance of a prearranged plan.

Allowing for all these things, it still, I think, remains the case that the greater mediæval towns grew by a natural process rather than were made by a town planner. When that admirable scholar Miss Mary Bateson told us that mediæval towns did not grow but were made, she had in her mind not the urban agglomeration but the legal corporation. The houses and the population grew ; they only became a technical "borough" when they had received their charter of liberties or incorporation. For us whose concern is with the mass of streets and houses and not with the legal relations of the inhabitants to the state in which they were included, the point has only a restricted and limited application to the new towns and quarters of towns of which we have already spoken.

The towns which developed by natural growth naturally extended themselves in all sorts of different ways. We have seen this even in the case of *bastides* and "new towns" : their general shape varied according to local conditions. But, if any generalization may be permitted at all, it may be lawful to say that the town which was made was normally rectilineal in outline, the town which grew tended to assume a circular or elliptical shape and to extend itself in successive portions which often assumed a concentric pattern. Now and then a made town may have been devised like this. But this type of expansion seems to me more characteristic of the town which grew of itself[1] than of a town which owes its origin to an act of creation.

[1] Prof. Unwin in the able lecture already referred to gives numerous instances of the concentric type of mediæval city formation, and has performed a valuable service in calling attention to them. Baghdad, the eastern prototype of the class, was originally planned as an almost perfect circle at the centre of which was the Khalif's palace, round which were public offices and open spaces, all this Governmental quarter being enclosed by a thin residential district on the inner side of the circular wall. The commercial quarters arose later by concentric rings outside the original enceinte. See the plan in G. Le Strange, *Bagdad during the Abbasid Caliphate*, and an adaptation from it published in the *Manchester Guardian* of 12 March,

Even the obvious military advantages of a shape approaching the circle did not outweigh the comparative simplicity of the simpler rectangular shape. And, however you plan your original town, the town planner never can tell how or where it will grow. Even the mediæval town planner was often baffled by the capricious and unexpected forces that controlled the building activities of the next generations. The town planner under the modern conditions of vast agglomerations, capable of indefinite expansion, will still find this rock ahead of him.

We have seen that town planning was the exception in the middle ages. It was also limited in its scope as well as in its extent. Here the town planners of the ancient and the mediæval worlds were both in the same predicament. They confined their efforts to devising straight streets of width adequate for their purpose, to providing building sites, squares and open places, similar in type and regular in outline, to planning the town defences on lines corresponding to its interior arrangements. The modern town planner does all these things, except the last, and he has only desisted from this since modern military science has made the town fortifications of a Brialmont as obsolete as those of a Vauban or of a St. Louis.

And he does these things on a larger scale and with greater resources. He is not hampered by the need of crowding his population together within the smallest possible area so as to make its defence practicable by a limited armed force. If he has to deal with hundreds of thousands while his predecessor had to deal with a score of hundreds, he has infinitely greater control over the material with which he is working, and by far greater authority at his back. Yet there is a tendency for even the modern town planner to limit himself in practice to the same categories followed by his predecessors. A simple-minded Lancastrian might well, before August, 1914, have come back from Düsseldorf or Berlin, thinking that in following the model of the broad avenues, the leafy gardens, and the vast and monumental tenements of even the poorest quarters of the modern planned German city, he had found the remedy for all the dreariness and irregularity, for all the mean streets and festering slums of the British manufacturing town. No doubt we should have

1917. I am not altogether convinced by Mr. Unwin's explanation of the type arising in the west by reason of the deliberate adoption of eastern models.

done well had we had a quarter of the method and training, the foresight and the imagination that have characterized the German town planner. But the philanthropist should not forget that the vast tenements of Germany may hide away overcrowding more hideous, and homes more cut off from life and air than we find even on the Tees, Tyne, or Clyde. If town planning is to realize the ideal of its promoters, it must have a wider vision than vouchsafed to the Germans of to-day, or to the city builders of the thirteenth century. For the problems which most vex the soul of the British social reformer made little appeal to the men of the middle ages. The mediæval town planner had a limited sanitary outlook. If he provided access to sources of water supply and gutters to carry away the rain water, he gave his burgesses all that he wanted. If, too, he made modest provision for the cleansing of the streets and prohibited pigs from haunting the public ways, he thought that everything necessary had been done to secure public health. The men of the middle ages were charitable to excess, but they were so accustomed to dwell in squalor and discomfort, and to witnessing the hideous sufferings of the poor surrounding them, that they accepted all the ills of life as inevitable. Piously regarding these horrors as the visitation of Providence, devised perhaps to punish them for their sins, they never conceived it was within their capacity to remedy existing conditions in any radical sense. The philanthropic or humanitarian motive underlying much of modern town planning was far in the background of the mediæval mind. The problem of overcrowding, the need of housing under healthy conditions were seldom, if ever, present to him. For these reasons alone the modern social reformer cannot expect to find much practical guidance from the town planner of the middle ages. For those less severely practical it should ever be interesting to see how the same problems present themselves, though under different conditions, throughout all the ages.

NOTE ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

It is impossible as a rule to reproduce the precise plan of a mediæval town. We can only study them in modern survivals or in maps which are sufficiently old to represent substantially mediæval conditions. For this purpose the great contributions to cartography made in the early seventeenth century mainly by Dutch map makers and their German and English imitators are of great value. Luckily the conditions of town life were so stable in

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that there is every reason to believe that such maps in many cases reproduce essentially the plan of the mediæval town. Whether the map drawer always took the trouble to be accurate is of course another matter, but even his imaginations are instructive to those who are seeking the general type rather than the exact topographical features of a given town. Moreover, the planned towns of the middle ages were so seldom prosperous and growing in modern centuries that the modern maps, whose precision is beyond question, can often confirm the accuracy of the old maps or suggest criticisms of them. For this reason some modern town plans have been figured, either as in the case of Salisbury for purposes of comparison, or as in the case of Winchelsea, because no really early maps are accessible. In some of the French *bastides* the dispositions are so well defined that a theoretical plan might almost be devised. A list of illustrations with a few notes on them is now appended.

I. Breslau in the Early Seventeenth Century. [From Braun and Hohenberg: *Civitates orbis terrarum. Cologne*, 1612-17.]

II. Vilna in the Early Seventeenth Century. [From Braun and Hohenberg: *Civitates orbis terrarum. Cologne*, 1612-17.]

III. Montpazier (Dordogne). [From Didron: *Annales Archéologiques*, xii. (1852).]

IV. Cadillac (Gironde). [From Braun and Hohenberg: *Civitates orbis terrarum. Cologne*, 1612-17.] The early seventeenth century ducal palace and the town enceinte of the same date take away part of the effect of the original plan. A visit to the place rather suggests the impression that the elaborate defences are due at least in part to the cartographer's imagination.

V. Aigues Mortes (Western half) (Gard). [From Didron: *Annales Archéologiques*, x. (1850). Here the modern conditions reproduce with absolute precision the line of the ancient walls and in all probability those of the original streets. The fortifications are of the reign of Philippe le Hardi (1270-85).]

VI. Salisbury in the Seventeenth Century. [From Speed: *Theatre of . . . Great Britaine. London*, 1676. Fol. 25.]

VII. Modern Salisbury. [From *The Ordnance Survey of England and Wales.*]

VIII. Flint in the Seventeenth Century. [From Speed: *Theatre of . . . Great Britaine. London*, 1676. Fol. 122.]

IX. Carnarvon in the Seventeenth Century. [From Speed: *Theatre of . . . Great Britaine. London*, 1676. Fol. 123.]

X. Hull in the Seventeenth Century. [From an engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar, *c.* 1665.]

XI. Modern Winchelsea. [From *The Ordnance Survey of England and Wales.*]

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